

Dragonshards

Druids of Khorvaire, Part Two

By Keith Baker



This week, we look at a grab bag of issues facing druids in the *Eberron Campaign Setting*.

Warforged Druids

Many people assume that warforged cannot become druids. The warforged are constructs crafted by human hands; what bond could a warforged possess with the world of nature? And yet, the warforged are *living* constructs. A large part of the body of a warforged is composed of fibrous strands not unlike the roots of a tree. Druidic life is a rare path for a warforged to follow, but a few have sought to explore their role as living creatures and to strengthen their bonds to the natural world.

A warforged druid faces a number of challenges. Both the Adamantine Body and Mithril Body feats cause a warforged druid to lose access to druidic abilities, just as if he was wearing metal armor. The only option for a warforged who wants improved armor and the full power of the druid is the Ironwood Body feat presented in *Races of Eberron*. On the positive side, both *goodberries* and wild shape are healing effects that are not actually part of the healing subschool; as such, both of these provide full benefits to the warforged druid.

Wild shape is a marvelous ability for a warforged druid, allowing the construct to transcend its partially inanimate nature and become a creature of flesh and blood. While in wild shape, a warforged is no longer considered a construct: it loses access to its racial immunities and any armor bonus it possesses from composite plating or Ironwood Body. It cannot be repaired using *repair damage*, but it receives the full benefit of spells of the healing subschool. While *Races of Eberron* states that warforged druids maintain armor bonuses and racial immunities in animal form, this is incorrect.

So far, those warforged that have joined established druid sects have gravitated toward the Wardens of the Wood, though the elder Gatekeepers have shown great interest in these possibly immortal guardians.

While some warforged druids are drawn to the Eldeen sects, reports from scavengers and scouts suggest that a new sect is forming in the Mournland: a band of warforged druids who call themselves the Followers of the Broken Path. These warforged seek to heal the damage that has been done to the Mournland and hope to learn about their own bonds to nature by restoring life to this broken land. A party of adventurers traveling through the Mournland could find an unusual oasis blossoming under the care of a group of the Followers; such an area could prove to be an exception to the rule of healing spells failing to function in the Mournland, and if not, a Follower druid could always assist wounded travelers by supplying *goodberries*... though the druids may ask a favor in return. There is much work to be done, and there are always terrors to fight in the Mournland.

Related Series

Interested in learning more about the rules governing warforged? The August *Rules of the Game* column explored this topic, examining the particulars of [living constructs](#). Also be sure to consult [Save My Game: Managing Artificers and Constructs](#) and [Dragonshards: Warforged Parts One](#) and [Two](#).

Druids and Dragonmarks

While the mercantile mindset of the dragonmarked houses does not produce many druids, members of House Vadalis sometimes feel the call of the wild, while heirs of House Lyrandar feel a deeper bond with wind and water. And in the end, any character could choose the path of the druid. So how does the dragonmark interact with the abilities of the druid?

A druid keeps his dragonmark while using wild shape. The mark actually remains visible as a pattern on the druid's fur or hide, and the druid can make full use of its abilities. However, the mark is not viable: a dragonmarked druid who assumes the shape of a stallion cannot sire a line of dragonmarked horses. Recognizing a dragonmark pattern on an animal requires a Spot check; this has a base DC of 15, plus modifiers based on the size of the creature and size of the mark:

Creature Size: Tiny +8, Small +4, Medium +0, Large -4, Huge -8

Mark Size: Least +8, Lesser +4, Greater +0, Siberys -4

Elemental Form: DC +8. While the mark remains even in elemental form, it is especially hard to make out: it is a vague pattern etched in air or fire.

As such, spotting a least mark on a Tiny creature would take a Spot check with a DC of 31.

A dragonmarked druid can use the thousand faces ability to conceal his mark, just as if using *alter self*.

Animal Companions and Templates

Unless she is specifically granted the ability to do so by a class feature or feat, a druid or ranger cannot take a templated creature as an animal companion. According to the *Player's Handbook*, an animal companion is "completely typical for its kind" except for abilities granted by the druid, and the **Eberron Campaign Setting** clarifies that druids and rangers cannot have magebred companions. A druid does not purchase her animal companion, nor does she find it; she calls it to her through a 24-hour ritual of prayer. This is why the **Eberron Campaign Setting** provides alternate companion

Reincarnation in Eberron

Powerful druids possess the ability to reincarnate those who fall in battle. This power is not often called into play; many druids respect the natural cycle of life, and furthermore, with their general lack of interest in material possessions, few druids have immediate access to the rare and expensive oils and unguents that are required to perform the ritual. However, if a champion dies a truly unjust death or falls while performing a great service to the wild, a druid may choose to call his spirit back to the world of the living.

The following table includes changelings and shifters, along with shifted weights reflecting the roles of races in Eberron -- such as the strong druidic ties of the orcs. You cannot be reincarnated as a warforged, although a warforged can be reincarnated as a member of another race. Kalashtar are not on the list, but if this table generates a result of "human" when used on a kalashtar spirit, the character will instead return as a kalashtar. A kalashtar who returns as any other creature loses her bond to her quori spirit, which can be a terribly traumatic experience.

d%	Incarnation	Str	Dex	Con
01-03	Bugbear	+4	+2	+2
04-08	Changeling	+0	+0	+0
09-15	Dwarf	+0	+0	+2
16-22	Elf	+0	+2	-2
23-24	Gnoll	+4	+0	+2
25-31	Gnome	-2	+0	+2
32-37	Goblin	-2	+2	+0
38-42	Half-elf	+0	+0	+0
43-49	Half-orc	2	+0	+0
50-56	Halfling	-2	+2	+0
57-61	Hobgoblin	+0	+2	+2
62-71	Human	+0	+0	+0
72-73	Kobold	-4	+2	-2
74-78	Lizardfolk	2	+0	+2
79-88	Orc	+4	+0	+0

lists for druids of all regions. It's not a question of where you are, but where you first mastered the druidic mysteries. A Valenar druid can always call a Valenar riding horse; a druid of the Demon Wastes can never call a Valenar riding horse, but at 4th level she *can* call a horrid rat... one example of a class feature specifically allowing bonding with a templated creature!

Next: Druids of other cultures!

89-98	Shifter	+0	+2	+0
99	Troglodyte	+0	-2	+4
100	Other	?	?	

A character who possesses a dragonmark will keep his dragonmark even in his new form. However, he cannot pass the dragonmark to his descendants. So *reincarnation* makes it possible to find an orc with the Mark of Storm, but this will not produce an entire dynasty of dragonmarked orcs.

About the Author

Keith Baker has been an avid fan of **Dungeons & Dragons** since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the world of Eberron to the Wizards of the Coast Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the **Eberron** Campaign Setting and *Shadows of the Last War*, he has worked for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.

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